

Northern Region youth earn DCFS scholarships

Most students head to college with the basic trappings of books, clothes and a calculator. But these students whose cases are handled in Northern Region had a send off that included paid tuition and academic fees at any of the participating Illinois universities and junior colleges, a monthly stipend of \$445 and a medical card for up to four years. The recipients of the 2005 DCFS Scholarship were selected from 218 worthy applicants. Based on their record of academic achievement, their community involvement, and personal successes, the young scholars featured below can now focus on their new path toward a college degree.



MARY ABBINANTI

Mary, of Addison, is a 2005 graduate of Addison Trail High School where she earned a 3.62 grade point average on a 4.0 system and was a two-year member of the National Honor Society.

She participated in band, volleyball, gymnastics, track, Tri-M (music honors), and the Letterman's Club, where she holds the office of vice-president. Mary's volunteer activities include church events and the Best Buddies program at school. She has worked at Al's Restaurant and the Addison Park District Fitness Club. Now Mary attends the University of Illinois-Chicago, majoring in criminal justice. Her career goal is to become an FBI or CIA agent.

ERIC ALBRECHT

Eric, of Warrenville, is a 2003 graduate of Beecher High School where he earned a 4.03 grade point average on a 5.0 system and participated in the Spanish club. His extra-curricular time in high school was devoted to employment, as he worked an average of 30 hours per week during his high school years. Eric is currently a junior at Northern Illinois University, majoring in political science with a minor in history. He has earned a 3.6 grade point

average on a 4.0 system at NIU and is on track to receive his BA degree in May 2007. He is active in Phi Sigma Zeta (a political science co-ed fraternity) and Alpha Phi Omega (a national service fraternity). His work with Alpha Phi Omega involves support of such charitable organizations as the Red Cross, March of Dimes, Kids Club, Safe Passage Drive, and Little Friend's Inc. Eric sees himself as a future lawyer.



RICKY ALFONSO

Ricky, of Woodstock, is a 2005 graduate of Marion Catholic High School where he was on the honor roll all four years and earned a 2.9 grade point average on a 4.0 system. His school activities included the Key Club, Operation Snowball, Faith In Action, and Project Hope, an organization Ricky was involved with for four years. Ricky also worked at Doherty Construction and Best Buy. He now attends Illinois State University, pursuing a major in business.

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Scholarship winners, con't.



BETHANY CARROLL

Bethany, of Bolingbrook, is a 2005 graduate of Bolingbrook High School where she earned a 3.84 grade point average on a 4.0 system and was a member of the National Honor Society. She scored a 28 on her ACT test and was ranked 47 in her class of 638. Her school activities included cross-country, track, softball, bowling, the drill and math teams, and the Foreign Language Club. Bethany has worked for a year at Eyeful Tower Optical. Now she is a student at the University of Illinois. She plans to major in aerospace engineering, and wants to become an astronaut.



NINA DIXON

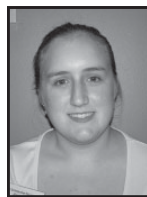
Nina, of Oak Park, is a 2005 graduate of Oak Park and River Forest High School where she earned a 2.5 grade point average on a 4.0 system and received the Human Relations Award. Her high school activities included cheerleading, Teens Against Tobacco Use, peer mediation, the Black Organization for Student Success, and the Student Council. Nina has volunteered at the Oak Park Public Library, Evangel Assembly of God Church, and cheerleading camps. She has worked at Spherion, Kiddieland Amusement Park, and Poly Cleaners. Now Nina is a student at Eastern Illinois University. Her major is elementary education. She hopes to become a teacher.



JOHN DOWHAMYLA

John, of Gardner, is a 2005 graduate of Gardner South Wilmington High School where he earned a 96 grade point average on a 100 system and ranked 9 in his class of 52. Academic honors he earned include the Illinois Principal Association Award and the Interstate 8 All Academic Award. His extensive list of school activities includes involvement with such clubs as the Students Against Drugs & Alcohol Club, the Business Club, and the Orange Crush Pep Club.

John's activities also include the Technology Preparation Team, the Student Advisory Committee, band, baseball, football, and basketball. He worked at the Gardner House Inn, A & A Electric, Handyman Construction, and Lenzie Farms. In addition, John volunteered for the Gardner Fire Department and the Village Hall of Gardner. John attends Illinois State University with a major in business.



JENNIFER MORROW-OSTERGARD

Jennifer, of Rockford, is a 2003 graduate of Rockford Auburn High School where she earned a 3.6 grade point average on a 4.0 system and ranked 51 in her class of 236. She received the National English Merit Award for creative writing and was listed in Who's Who Among American High School Students. In high school, Jennifer participated in the swim team and the Principal's Advisory Board. She currently attends Rock Valley College where she will graduate in 2006 and continue her education at Northern Illinois University. At Rock Valley, Jennifer received the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society award. She is majoring in psychology with plans to secure a Master's Degree in psychology and become an adolescent therapist.



CHADD ORI

Chadd, of Antioch, is a 2005 graduate of Antioch Community High School where he earned a 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 system and was ranked 186 in his class of 517. He was on the high and regular honor roll during his last two years of high school. An excellent athlete, Chadd participated in baseball, football, and basketball. In addition to operating his own lawn mowing business, he worked at Ace Hardware and Marble Slab Creamery. Chadd now attends the College of Lake County and plans to major in engineering or business.



KATIE POWELL- STRAWBRIDGE

Katie, of Machesney Park, is a 2005 graduate of Harlem High School where she earned a 3.9 grade point average on a 4.0 system. She ranked 36 in her class of 488 and is a National Honor Society member. Her extensive volunteer activities included the 2004 Special Olympics, several fund raising events, and involvement with the Rockford Rescue Mission. School activities included the yearbook and the Smaller Learning Student Committee. Katie attends Rock Valley College, majoring in social services. Future plans include a commitment to work with abused and neglected children.



AMANDA PROBASCO

Amanda from Rochelle, is a 2005 graduate of Rochelle High School where she earned a 3.97 grade point average on a 4.0 system and ranked 12 in her class of 237. Her academic awards included the high honor roll, National Honor Society, Renaissance Gold Plus, and Renaissance Academic Excellence Award. She participated in basketball, softball, volleyball, band, the Student Council, and she served as an office monitor. Amanda devoted volunteer services to the Toy Drive, Rock River Blood Center, the Booster Club, and Make a Difference Day. She has worked as a softball umpire and corn detassler. Amanda now attends Illinois State University with a major in nursing.

TIFFANY TAYLOR

Tiffany, of Steger, is a 2005 graduate of Bloom Trail High School where she earned a 2.93 grade point average on a 4.0 system, ranked 105 in her class of 323, and was on the honor roll. She has volunteered the past two summers at HandiCamp where she worked with children with physical disabilities. Her high school activities included the Spanish Club, Student Council, the African-American Student Association, and volleyball. Tiffany has worked at Best Buy since 2003 (averaging 30 hours per week) and was recognized as the company's Most Valuable Employee. She attends the University of Illinois-Chicago, majoring in psychology.

Northern Region Education Network



*Mitch
Kremer*



*Rhonda
Best*

Education Network Meetings are held monthly in the Aurora Regional Office. This is an opportunity for DCFS staff, POS educational liaisons, foster parents and any other interested individuals to learn more about educational issues. In addition to the topic of the month, time is set aside to problem solve issues and receive educational updates.

Education advisors Rhonda Best and Mitch Kremer facilitate the network meetings.

Upcoming topics are:

- October 18 – Bullying/Harassment in Schools
- November 15 – Transition and Post Secondary Options
- January 17 – What to do when Students are Failing or Truant

The meetings are from 9:30 a.m. until noon. If you are interested in attending contact Rhonda Best, Education Advisor, at 815-967-3750.

Northern News

Regional Reporter

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DCFS Reporter/Editor
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Phone: 630-844-8400
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Anyone can call the regional reporter with foster parent association news and schedules; local training notices; features on foster families and community members working for children; photos; and ideas for news articles or supportive services that would be helpful for caregivers to know.

Northern Region Training Calendar

FosterPRIDE In-Service Training

All licensed foster parents and adoptive parents are welcome to attend any or all of the PRIDE In-Service Trainings to enhance their skills and meet yearly training requirements.

Module 1 - *The Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children* (Four 3-hour sessions = 12 training hours)

Module 2 - *Using Discipline to Protect and Nurture* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 3 - *Child Development* - New module being written

Module 4 - *Child Sexual Development and Sexual Abuse* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 5 - *Supporting Relationships Between Children and Their Families* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 6 - *Working as a Professional Team Member* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 7 - *Promoting Children's Personal & Cultural Identity* (Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours)

Module 8 - *Promoting Permanency Outcomes* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 9 - *Managing the Fostering Experience* (Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours)

Module 10 - *Understanding the Effects of Chemical Dependency on Children & Families* (Five 3-hour sessions = 15 training hours)

College of DuPage Area 630-942-2903

Module

KANKAKEE - Kankakee Comm. Coll.
Nov. 17 (Thu) & 6:30-9:30 p.m. 4
Nov. 19 (Sat) 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

LOCKPORT/JOLIET - SOS Childrens Village
Oct. 18 & 25 9 a.m.-12 p.m. 7
(Tue)

Rock Valley Area 815-921-2301

Please call the number listed above for upcoming training dates.

Educational Advocacy

Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hrs.

It is mandatory for one foster parent in each family to attend Educational Advocacy Training in order to be re-licensed. Educational Advocacy Training is offered following each Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE training and many additional times. This six-hour course covers information foster parents need to know so that they can advocate for their foster children's educational rights and needs.

College of DuPage Area 630-942-2903

AURORA Comfort Suites City Ctr.
Oct. 15 (Sat) 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

ELGIN Judson College
Dec. 10 (Sat) 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

GLEN ELLYN College of DuPage
Nov. 19 (Sat) 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

ROMEOVILLE Comfort Inn
Dec. 3 (Sat) 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

KANKAKEE Kankakee Comm. Coll.
Dec. 3 (Sat) 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

WAUKEGAN Ramada Inn
Oct. 22 (Sat) 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Non-PRIDE Inservice Training

College of DuPage Area 630-942-2903

PRIDE Revisions Update Training
(One 2.5 hour session = 2.5 training credit hours)

Elgin - Judson College
Nov. 10 (Thu) 6:30-9 p.m.

Rock Valley Area 815-921-2015

Stress Management for Foster Parents
(One 2 hour session = 2 training credit hours)

ROCKFORD - Strenstrom Center
Oct. 11 (Tue) 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Rock Valley Area 815-921-2010

DIXON Loveland Comm. House
Dec. 17 (Sat) 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

ROCKFORD Strenstrom Center/RVC
Nov. 5 (Sat) 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Dec 20 & 22 (Tue/Thu) 6-9 p.m.

**Pre-registration is
required for all classes!**

**Call the number listed for
your area.**